

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A balance (1) comprising a weighing compartment (4) that borders on a stationary part (8, 9) of the balance and is otherwise enclosed by at least one side wall panel (5, 6), a front wall panel (7), and a top cover panel (12); wherein at least one of said panels is slidable by means of a guiding device (17, 20) to open and close the weighing compartment (4); and further comprising a handle (13) serving at least one of the purposes of lifting the balance (1) off a support surface and carrying the balance (1), wherein the guiding device (120) of the top cover panel (12) is at least partially integrated in the handle (13).

2. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 1, wherein the handle (13) is attached to the stationary part (8, 9) of the balance (1).

3. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 1, wherein the handle (13) is arranged on top of the balance (1).

4. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 3, wherein the handle (13) is arranged near the top cover panel (12).

5. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 1, wherein the handle (13) is designed and is arranged on the balance (1) in such a way, that the balance (1) can be lifted with one hand.

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently amended) The balance (1) of claim [[6]] 1, wherein the handle (13) is configured as a rail for a guide element (14) of the guiding device (120) of the top cover panel (12).

8. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 7, wherein the guide element (14) comprises a vertical body (78) holding a vertical gear shaft (66) with an upper gear (73a) and a lower gear (74a) and the guiding device comprises a pair of gear racks (73, 74) meshing with the gears (73a, 74a).

9. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 7, wherein the guide element (14) is laterally guided in the guiding device (120) by a gliding constraint that prevents jamming of the guide element (14).

10. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 7, wherein the guide element (14) is laterally guided in the guiding device (120) by a

rolling constraint that comprises guide rollers (75, 76) and provides jamming of the guide element (14)

11. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 1, further comprising a holder element (15) for the top cover panel (12), wherein the holder element (15) is integrated in the guiding device, and wherein the holder element has a form-locking closure device that holds and releases the top cover panel (12) through application of a manual force to at least one of the top cover panel (12) and the holder element (15).

12. (Original) The balance (1) of claim 1, further comprising a clutch lever (16) arranged on the handle (13), whereby the top cover panel (12) can be coupled to and uncoupled from a motorized drive mechanism that serves to move the at least one slidable wall (5, 6, 12).